

CLAIMS**What is claimed is:**

- 5 1. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system for monitoring and recording single tasks forming part of a project performable by two employees that function as a task Originator and a task Recipient in a matrix based organization, comprising:
 - 10 a. task state machine system software means for enforcing the rules of the task state machine, incorporating schema required by the task state machine diagram; and persisting all task state changes to a relational database.
 - b. task state machine graphic interface means associated with said system software for providing ability to transact tasks, and for providing visibility of task related details to employees based on organizational hierarchy.
- 15 2. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited by claim 1, wherein said system software means is resident on a single server computer.
3. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited by claim 1, wherein said system software means is distributed over a secure network, such as an Intranet or an Internet.
- 20 4. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited in claim 1 wherein said task state machine graphic interface means incorporates said task state diagram and is based on a Task Role of Originator, Recipient, None - (Visual Rights only), and Task State of Generate, Request, Accept, Submit, Close, Decline and Cancel.

5. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited by claim 4 wherein the Task Role is Originator and said Task State is Generate, defining a task.
- 5 6. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited in claim 4 wherein the Task Role is Originator and said Task State is Request, requesting a defined task from a Recipient.
7. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited in claim 4 wherein the Task Role is Recipient and said Task State is Request, said defined task being evaluated by the Recipient to determine if the task should be accepted,
10 declined or modified.
8. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited in claim 4 wherein the Task Role is Recipient or Originator and said Task State is Request or Accept, said defined task being modified by invoking New Change Request.
9. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited in claim
15 4 wherein the Task Role is None - (Visibility rights only) and Task State is Request, said defined task being viewable by any one in the enterprise who has implicit visibility rights because they are in the upward, inline management of the Originator or the Recipient of the task.
10. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited in claim
20 4 wherein the Task Role is Recipient and Task State is Accept, said defined task being accepted by the Recipient through one-on-one negotiation.
11. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited in claim 4 wherein the Task Role is None - (Visibility rights only) and Task State is Accept, said accepted task being viewable by any one in the enterprise who has

implicit visibility rights because they are in the upward, inline management of the Originator or the Recipient of the task.

12. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited in claim 4 wherein the Task Role is Recipient and Task State is Submit, said task being submitted by the Recipient in the form of an RTF file or other file type based on filters loaded in the said system software.
13. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited in claim 4 wherein the Task Role is None - (Visibility rights only) and said Task State is Submit, said submitted task being viewable by any one in the enterprise who has implicit visibility rights because they are in the upward, inline management of the Originator or the Recipient of the task.
14. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited in claim 4 wherein the Task Role is Originator and said Task State is Submit, said submitted task being reviewed by the Originator to accept and close the task or reject and submit for rework by the Recipient.
15. An enterprise wide task and commitment management system as recited by claim 4, wherein inline managers using Task Role None - (Visibility Rights only) monitor the task generation, task execution and task submission and task commitment for:
 - a. generating employee performance appraisals and substantiating the appraisal with selective task content from the database;
 - b. mining the database for recurring tasks and multiple, linked recurring tasks to discover inefficiencies and consequently redesign a business process to gain efficiencies; and

- c. providing first hand content of who did what and when to prove compliance of state or federal regulations.